



H E L P D O C U M E N T A T I O N

FastLane Help System

Graduate Research Fellowship Program FAQs

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GRFP FAQs

Graduate Research Fellowship Program FAQs Introduction

The FAQs for the Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP) are organized for use by the category of user as follows:

- [Applicants](#)
- [Reference Writers](#)
- [Fellows](#)
- [Fellows Abroad](#)
- [Coordinating Officials](#)

GRFP FAQs for Applicants

1. Who can help me with questions regarding the GRFP application process?
2. I lost my password for the GRFP application. How can I get it?
3. I do not know my email address to provide on the Forgot Password screen, or I have not received the temporary password. What should I do?
4. I lost my username for the GRFP application. How can I retrieve it?
5. Where do I direct technical questions regarding FastLane and the GRFP?
6. How can I determine if I am eligible to apply for the GRFP?
7. Applying for GRFP takes a lot of effort, and I don't want to apply if I'm not eligible. Can I find out if I'm eligible before I apply?
8. For GRFP eligibility purposes, do courses I'm currently taking count as complete?
9. I am in the process of becoming a permanent resident alien, but I won't have my green card until after the GRFP application deadline. Am I still eligible?
10. I don't see my field on the list provided in the program solicitation for the GRFP. Am I eligible?
11. What application materials do I need to submit for the GRFP?
12. I applied for the GRFP fellowship last year. Can I just send in copies of last year's information? Can I re-activate materials from an old application?
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21. What academic transcripts are required for the GRFP and where should transcripts be sent?
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23. How can I confirm that my electronic application for the GRFP was submitted?
24. I have applied to several graduate schools but I haven't been accepted to any yet. What should I put down for my proposed graduate institution for the GRFP?
25. After I submitted my application for the GRFP, I was published in a scientific journal. I would like to add that in my application. What do I need to do?
26. Should references or citations be included in the essays for the GRFP, and if so, do they count as part of the page limit?
27. What are the formatting and page number restrictions for the essays for the GRFP?
28. What do I do if I have not had any direct research experience for the GRFP application?
29. My university mailed my transcripts directly to your office instead of to me for the GRFP. Is that okay?
30. Should I send a transcript of my grades after I complete my courses this fall for the GRFP?
31. Most institutions have a long transcript request turnaround time, and there is a due date for transcripts. Will my application for the GRFP be incomplete if my transcripts aren't returned by that date?

32. I attended a university overseas for one semester. It is very difficult to obtain a transcript. It probably won't get here in time for the deadline for the GRFP. Do I still have to get a transcript from the international university?
33. Can you tell me if you have received my transcripts for the GRFP?
34. I don't plan on taking the GRE General and Subject Tests because my graduate institution does not require them. Do I have to take them for the GRFP fellowship?
35. Will NSF automatically report my GRE scores to the reviewers for the GRFP?
36. Will NSF pay for an applicant's GRE tests for the GRFP?
37. I would like for NSF to pay for the administration of the Subject Test on November 8, 2008, but I do not have the Request for Payment of GRE Subject Test Fee form for the GRFP. What should I do?
38. I took the GRE more than five years ago. Can these scores be evaluated in the GRFP competition?
39. I am preparing my application for the GRFP. Is the GRE confirmation number the same as the test registration number?
40. I am preparing my application for the GRFP. What do I do if ETS/GRE has my name wrong in their system?
41. I am preparing my application for the GRFP, and I heard about FASED. What is FASED and how do I apply for it?
42. I am preparing my application for the GRFP, and have chosen an institution for my graduate work. However, can I move to another institution and still keep my award?
43. I am preparing my application for the GRFP. Can the Fellowship be used in a foreign university?
44. Can you explain the Merit Review Criteria for the GRFP?
45. Who are the panelists that review the applications for the GRFP?
46. I heard that applications for the GRFP are pre-screened and if your GPA is below a certain average, your application isn't considered. Is this true?
47. Since applicants can't revise an application after it's been submitted, how do I make changes to my references in the application for the GRFP?
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49. I just started graduate school and my professors don't really know me well enough to fill out the References for the GRFP. What should I do?
50. How do my references for the GRFP know they have successfully submitted their References?
51. Can my references for the GRFP upload their comments, or do they have to type comments on a form in FastLane?
52. My institution has letters of reference on file in the Placement Office, or my reference has provided me with a general letter of reference. Can I go ahead and use that letter for the GRFP?
53. Can you tell me if you have received my Reference Letters for the GRFP?
54. What type of information should referees include in their GRFP reference letter?
55. What is the deadline for submitting GRFP reference letters?

1. Who can help me with questions regarding the GRFP application process?

For questions related to the application process or requirements, contact the Graduate Research Fellowship Operations Center. The Operations Center helpdesk is staffed between the hours of 8:30 am and 5:30 pm EST Monday through Friday. Contact it in any of these ways:

- Email: info@nsfgrfp.org
- Toll Free Phone: 866-NSF-GRFP (866-673-4737)
- International Phone 202-331-3542.

2. I lost my password for the GRFP application. What should I do?

On the main GRFP login screen, click Forgot My Password to request that a temporary password be sent to you at the primary email address you provided during account setup. You may also reset your password directly on the Forgot My Password screen by using the password secret questions feature.

3. I do not know my email address to provide on the Forgot Password screen, or I have not received the temporary password. What should I do?

For resetting a password directly, please use the Forgot Password link on the FastLane/GRFP login box. If you have forgotten your email address, contact the GRF Operations Center at 1-866-673-GRFP (4737) (office hours: Monday-Friday, 8:30 am - 5:30 pm EST) or email info@nsfgrfp.org.

4. I lost my username for the GRFP application. How can I retrieve it?

You can click the Forgot Username link and retrieve your username after you have completed the screen form. Or contact the FastLane Help Central at 1-800-673-6188 (office hours: Monday-Friday, 7 am - 9 pm EST) or email fastlane@nsf.gov.

5. Where do I direct technical questions regarding FastLane and the GRFP?

Contact the FastLane Help Central at 1-800-673-6188 (office hours: Monday-Friday, 7 am - 9 pm EST) or email fastlane@nsf.gov.

6. How can I determine if I am eligible to apply for the GRFP?

Eligibility requirements are described in the Program Solicitation and on the GRFP.

7. Applying for GRFP takes a lot of effort, and I don't want to apply if I'm not eligible. Can I find out if I'm eligible before I apply?

No, unfortunately, you cannot. Your eligibility is reviewed on the basis of the contents of your entire submitted application. The text in the Program Solicitation is the only official eligibility guidance you can receive. Read the Program Solicitation closely to be sure you are interpreting the eligibility requirements properly. Seek additional advice from your mentors, professors, or academic advisors. When deciding to apply, consider your relative qualifications, eligibility concerns, and estimated time investment balanced against the benefits the GRFP provides.

8. For GRFP eligibility purposes, do courses I'm currently taking count as complete?

No. Only courses from academic periods that have ended are considered complete for eligibility purposes.

9. I am in the process of becoming a permanent resident alien, but I won't have my green card until after the GRFP application deadline. Am I still eligible?

Permanent resident status must be established by the application deadline.

10. I don't see my field on the list provided in the program solicitation for the GRFP. Am I eligible?

NSF-supported fields are listed in the FY 2009 Program Solicitation. For further information concerning program solicitations, visit the NSF website at www.nsf.gov.

11. What application materials do I need to submit for the GRFP?

Complete applications include (1) information that must be submitted electronically using NSF's FastLane Graduate Research Fellowship Program application module, (2) Official Academic Transcripts submitted in hard copy to the GRF Operations Center, and (3) three letters of reference submitted electronically using NSF's FastLane Reference Letter submission. GRE scores are optional but recommended.

12. I applied for the GRFP fellowship last year. Can I just send in copies of last year's information? Can I re-activate materials from an old application?

No. NSF cannot reactivate or reuse materials submitted in prior years. However, you can use the same user name and password from your old application to log into FastLane to begin a new application. All application information must be re-entered, except for your personal profile information, which can and should be updated.

13. Where can I find information about the relevant deadlines for the GRFP?

Complete information regarding GRFP deadlines, requirements, and submission methods can be found at the Graduate Research Fellowship Program module.

14. How many GRFP fellowships will be awarded?

NSF will award approximately 1,000 fellowships.

15. Do I need to attend school full-time if awarded a GRFP fellowship?

Yes, the fellowship is intended only for students enrolled in full-time programs leading to graduate degrees in disciplines supported by NSF.

16. What materials should I review before beginning my GRFP application?

Read and understand the Program Solicitation to get an understanding of the program benefits, requirements, and how your application will be evaluated. Review the Applicant User Guide to identify the information you need to provide and specific instructions for filling out the online application. Review the GRFP FAQs, which clarify the Program Solicitation and the Applicant User Guide. These links can be found at FastLane's GRFP module.

17. I am preparing my application for the GRFP. How can I learn about the types of research projects NSF funds?

You can visit NSF's website (www.nsf.gov) for information and guidance about current and emerging themes within the NSF directorates (departments). You can review the NSF Guide to Programs at www.nsf.gov/funding/ as well as the NSF's database of funded projects (awards) at www.nsf.gov/awardsearch/ for specific funding information. You should also discuss your proposed research with your mentors, professors, or researchers, who have applied for NSF grants in your field.

18. Can I submit my GRFP application material after the deadlines?

NSF does not accept application material that is late. Applicants must adhere to the deadlines for submitting both the FastLane Application Information electronically and the hard copy Supporting Application Materials. These deadlines are posted at <https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/grfp/> during the period open for applications.

19. Is there any advantage to submitting my GRFP application material before the deadline?

You are encouraged to submit your application in advance of the deadlines to avoid delays in electronic submission that may be caused by traffic volume. We suggest that you complete the Personal Statement and Previous Research Experience as early as possible to allow ample time for editing. This will eliminate delays at the time of submission. Also, do not wait until submission to check for error and warning messages. Periodically click the **Check Application Completeness** button and resolve errors as you go to avoid delays at the time of submission.

20. What is a semester or quarter hour mentioned in the GRFP application?

Most U.S. institutions of higher education are on either a semester system or a quarter hour system and count their course credits accordingly. For the purposes of the GRFP application, use whatever system is applicable to you. Official transcripts normally include, next to the course grade, the credits per course with cumulative totals at the end. The transcript key should include a statement of the credit system the school uses; the registrar's office for that institution can also provide this information.

21. What official academic transcripts are required for the GRFP and where should the transcripts be sent?

Academic transcripts are required for all institutions listed in the Education and Work Experience section of your application. Required transcripts to complete your application include academic transcripts from your baccalaureate institution and transcripts for all completed graduate work. If your undergraduate transcripts include all transfer credits, such as community college or summer courses, you do not need to list each undergraduate institution attended. Please read the Application Preparation Instructions in the Program Solicitation for more information on the transcripts requirements. We recommend applicants send in transcripts ahead of the deadline.

Official transcript(s) are required in hard copy sent via postal mail, express service, or courier to:

GRF Operations Center
Suite T-50
1818 N Street NW

Washington, DC 20036-2479

22. How do I apply for the Women in Engineering (WENGs) and Computer and Information Science (WICS) awards for the GRFP?

Women who apply in fields listed under Engineering or under Computer and Information Science and Engineering in the Program Solicitation (<https://www.fastlane.nsf.gov/grfp/>) may be considered for the Women in Engineering (WENGs) and Computer and Information Science (WICS) awards. There is no separate application for these awards.

23. How can I confirm that my electronic application for the GRFP was submitted?

FastLane will display the status of application information that is submitted. Applicants can view the status by accessing Fastlane. The status of the application is displayed on the screen after you log into the system; after you submit your application, a screen displays stating that your application is now submitted. If the submission of the FastLane application package was successful and if you provided a valid email address as part of the application, you will also receive a confirmation email message that same day. If the submission was not successful, you will not receive a confirmation email message. Throughout the process you can view and print your application using the View/Print Application option.

24. I have applied to several graduate schools, but I haven't been accepted to any yet. What should I put down for my proposed graduate institution for the GRFP?

You do not have to be accepted to an institution before listing it on your application. Carefully select the institution you wish to attend if you were granted a fellowship, as reviewers will consider the appropriateness of the choice relevant to your proposed field of research.

25. After I submitted my application for the GRFP, I was published in a scientific journal. I would like to add that in my application. What do I need to do?

NSF does not permit revisions to the essays after the submission deadline.

26. Should references or citations be included in the essays for the GRFP, and if so, do they count as part of the page limit?

Yes on both counts. Necessary references and/or citations should be included in your essays and will count towards the page limit.

27. What are the formatting and page number restrictions for the essays for the GRFP?

- All essays should be written using a 12 point Times New Roman font. Small type size makes it difficult for reviewers to read the application; consequently, the use of small type not in compliance with the application guidelines may be grounds for NSF to return the application without review.

- There is a 2-page limit for the Personal Statement, Previous Research Experience, and Proposed Plan of Research essays. There is a 1-page limit for the Eligibility Essay (for those having completed greater than 12 months of graduate study). References and citations are included toward the page limits.
- All essays should be written using the standard 8.5" x 11" page size with 1 inch margins.
- Character spacing should use normal (100%) single-line space option. Do not condense line spacing or reduce the character spacing scale. Adherence to type size and page length is necessary to ensure that no applicant will have an unfair advantage, by using smaller type or line spacing to provide more text in the application.
- Images may be included in your essays, however they will be produced only in black and white. All images, footnotes, endnotes, and other citations are included in the page limit.
- Prepare your response using a word-processor.

28. What do I do if I have not had any direct research experience for the GRFP application?

If you have had no direct research experience, describe any activities that you believe have prepared you to undertake a research-based graduate degree, including working on open-ended problems and developing plans to solve them.

29. My university mailed my transcripts directly to your office instead of to me for the GRFP. Is that all right?

Either the applicant or the university may send the transcripts directly to the GRF Operations Center. Transcripts cannot be sent to NSF headquarters.

30. Should I send a transcript of my grades after I complete my courses this fall for the GRFP?

No. As part of the applications process, you should submit Official Transcripts of your academic records, graduate and undergraduate, completed as of the date of application.

31. Most institutions have a long transcript request turnaround time, and there is a due date for transcripts. Will my application for the GRFP be incomplete if my transcripts aren't returned by that date?

Transcripts must be received by the posted deadline. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that Official Transcripts are submitted to the GRF Operations Center.

32. I attended a university overseas for one semester. It is very difficult to obtain a transcript. It probably won't get here in time for the deadline for the GRFP. Do I still have to get a transcript from the international university?

Applicants are required to submit Official Academic Transcripts as described in the program solicitation. However, applicants may not be disqualified if they are unable to submit Official Academic Transcripts from international institutions, if they can

provide other evidence of academic achievement at those institutions. Transcripts must be in English.

33. Can you tell me if you have received my transcripts for the GRFP?

Applicants will be able to check the status of their application materials online on FastLane at the Application Package Status feature.

34. I don't plan on taking the GRE General and Subject Tests because my graduate institution does not require them. Do I have to take them for the GRFP fellowship?

No. While scores from the GRE General and Subject Tests are highly recommended, they are not a requirement for application to this program.

35. Will NSF automatically report my GRE scores to the reviewers for the GRFP?

If you want the Educational Testing Service (ETS), which administers the GRE, to report your GRE scores to GRF Operations Center for the fellowship competition, answer "Yes" to the questions listed under the GRE Test Scores section of your FastLane Application. If you answer "No" or leave the questions blank, no GRE scores will be included in your applicant file.

36. Will NSF pay for an applicant's GRE tests for the GRFP?

NSF will pay Subject Test registration fees for applicants who register for the November 8, 2008, exam date if both of these conditions are met:

- The NSF Fellowship application is the primary purpose.
- The GRE registration form for the November test is received at ETS no later than October 3, 2008.

The following condition is imposed on the reporting of the November 8, 2008 GRE Subject Test scores when NSF pays the test fee. Prior to May 1, 2009, these scores will be reported only for the NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program, to the fellowship applicant, and to the applicant's undergraduate institution.

37. I would like for NSF to pay for the administration of the Subject Test on November 8, 2008, but I do not have the Request for Payment of GRE Subject Test Fee form for the GRFP. What should I do?

You may download the form through the Application Optional Task List, which is accessed through the FastLane application module.

38. I took the GRE more than 5 years ago. Can these scores be evaluated in the GRFP competition?

NSF accepts only GRE scores from tests taken between October 1, 2003, and November 30, 2008, for the 2009 NSF Graduate Research Fellowship competition.

39. I am preparing my application for the GRFP. Is the GRE confirmation number the same as the test registration number?

No. The test registration number is provided on the score report for the computer-based General Test and on the admission ticket and the score report for the Subject Test. Do not use the confirmation number received before taking the computer-based General Test in place of the registration number.

40. I am preparing my application for the GRFP. What do I do if ETS/GRE has my name wrong in their system?

Contact the Educational Testing Service (ETS) to correct the data in their system and also report this information under the GRE Test Scores section in the online application module. We will work with ETS to match the records in their system with your application.

41. I am preparing my application for the GRFP, and I heard about FASED. What is FASED and how do I apply for it?

FASED stands for Facilitation Awards for Scientists with Disabilities. Details of this program can be found at http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=5516.

42. I am preparing my application for the GRFP, and have chosen an institution for my graduate work. However, can I move to another institution and still keep my award?

Yes, the Fellowship is portable. Fellows need to request the change by electronically submitting a tenure change request within the Graduate Research Fellowship application.

43. I am preparing my application for the GRFP. Can the Fellowship be used in a foreign university?

Yes. If you are going to study in a foreign institution, you will be called a Fellow Abroad, and NSF will administer your award directly (as opposed to administering it through your institution). Please see [FAQs for Fellows Abroad](#).

44. Can you explain the Merit Review Criteria for the GRFP?

This refers to the considerations that are applied to fellowship applications to assess their merit for award consideration. Complete information regarding the NSF Merit Review Criteria, how the criteria relates to the GRFP application, and the GRFP review process can be found in the FY 2009 Program Solicitation in the GRFP module of FastLane. Refer to the [NSF Grant Proposal Guide](#), Chapter III for further information.

45. Who are the panelists that review the applications for the GRFP?

Panelists are a diverse group of individuals who are recognized experts in the relevant academic disciplines and have experience in graduate education. If the panel considers the application to be multidisciplinary, a member of another disciplinary panel may be asked to review the application.

46. I heard that applications for the GRFP are pre-screened and that if your GPA is below a certain average, your application isn't considered. Is this true?

No. Applications are not pre-screened for merit.

47. Since applicants can't revise an application after it's been submitted, how do I make changes to my references in the application for the GRFP?

After an application has been submitted, changes can only be made to References through the Manage References link listed under the Application Optional Task List.

48. I submitted my application for the GRFP via FastLane. Do my references have to submit by FastLane also?

Yes. NSF accepts only reference letters that are submitted via FastLane for the NSF Graduate Research Fellowship program. Reference letters must be submitted by the published reference letter deadline.

49. I just started graduate school, and my professors don't really know me well enough to fill out the references for the GRFP. What should I do?

It is to the applicant's advantage to submit references from faculty members who have current knowledge of the applicant's academic work and scholarly development. If that is not possible, as in the case of applicants who have been out of school for some time, letters from other faculty or employers would be appropriate. NSF suggests that at least two of the three references be persons with whom you have worked in your present (or most recent) department, including your thesis adviser.

50. How do my references for the GRFP know they have successfully submitted their references?

If the submission of the FastLane references was successful, the referee will receive a confirmation email message within the same day. The referee can also log back into FastLane and view the submitted reference PDF.

51. Can my references for the GRFP upload their comments, or do they have to type comments on a form in FastLane?

Referees can only upload their comments into FastLane using the provided utility. FastLane does not provide a text box for typing comments.

52. My institution has letters of reference on file in the Placement Office, or my reference has provided me with a general letter of reference. Can I go ahead and use that letter for the GRFP?

The letters need to be uploaded by your reference into FastLane. General letters of reference are not recommended: they need to be tailored to your GRF application. Panelists look for reference letters that demonstrate knowledge of your proposed research as well as specifically address your intellectual merit and the broader impact of your activities.

53. Can you tell me if you have received my reference letters for the GRFP?

Applicants can check the status of each reference letter by logging into FastLane and clicking the **Manage References** link.

54. What type of information should referees include in their GRFP reference letter?

We ask that in a reference letter, the referee do the following:

- Indicate his or her department and institution, and how long they have known you, and in what capacity.
- On the basis of knowledge of your past and current research experience and activities, comment on your potential to do the following:
 - Succeed in graduate school,
 - Conduct original research,
 - Communicate effectively,
 - Work cooperatively with peers and supervisors, and
 - Make unique contributions to your chosen discipline and to society in general.
- If he or she has known or supervised other NSF Graduate Research Fellows, compare you with them. Otherwise, compare you to other successful graduate students or senior undergraduates that he or she has known in their institution or through interactions with other institutions.
- Comment on the broader impacts of supporting you, including your leadership potential in the chosen field of graduate work and in general, as a member of the scientific and technical community.

Note that the more specific (as opposed to generic) a letter the referee can provide, the better it is for you as an applicant. If the referee is your research supervisor, the referee should comment on the originality of your proposal, and communicate what role he or she played in assisting you with the proposal.

The following are the two issues that are the basis of NSF's merit review criteria:

- **Intellectual Merit:** The intellectual merit criterion includes demonstrated intellectual ability and other accepted requisites for scholarly scientific study, such as the ability to: (1) plan and conduct research; (2) work as a member of a team as well as independently; and (3) interpret and communicate research findings. Panelists are instructed to consider: the strength of the academic record, the proposed plan of research, the description of previous research experience, the appropriateness of the choice of references and the extent to which they indicate merit, Graduate Record Examinations (GRE) General and Subject Tests scores, and the appropriateness of the choice of institution for fellowship tenure relative to the proposed plan of research.
- **Broader Impacts:** The broader impacts criterion includes contributions that (1) effectively integrate research and education at all levels, infuse learning with the excitement of discovery, and assure that the findings and methods of research are communicated in a broad context and to a large audience; (2) encourage diversity, broaden opportunities, and enable the participation of all citizens—women and men, underrepresented minorities, and persons with disabilities—in science and research; (3) enhance scientific and technical understanding; and (4) benefit society. Applicants may provide characteristics of their background, including personal, professional, and educational experiences, to indicate their potential to fulfill the broader impacts criterion.

55. What is the deadline for submitting GRFP reference letters?

Reference letters must be submitted by December 1, 2008.

GRFP FAQs for Reference Writers

1. What type of information should referees include in their GRFP reference letter?
2. I have been requested to provide a reference letter for a Graduate Research Fellowship applicant. I have lost the email from FastLane on how to log in as a reference writer. Who can help me retrieve my login information?
3. I lost my password for the GRFP application. How can I get it?
4. I have been requested to provide a reference letter for a Graduate Research Fellowship applicant. I have lost the email from FastLane. I would like another copy of the email. Who should I ask to resend the email?

1. What type of information should referees include in their GRFP reference letter?

In your reference letter, we ask you to do the following:

- Indicate your department and institution, and how long you have known the applicant, and in what capacity.
- On the basis of your knowledge of the applicant's past and current research experience and activities, comment on his or her potential to do the following:
 - Succeed in graduate school
 - Conduct original research
 - Communicate effectively
 - Work cooperatively with peers and supervisors
 - Make unique contributions to his/her chosen discipline and to society in general
- If you have known or supervised other NSF Graduate Research Fellows, compare this applicant with them. Otherwise, compare this applicant with other successful graduate students or senior undergraduates that you have known in your institution or through your interactions with other institutions.
- Comment on the broader impacts of supporting this applicant, including his or her leadership potential in the chosen field of graduate work and in general, as a member of the scientific and technical community.

Note that the more specific (as opposed to generic) a letter you can provide, the better it is for the candidate. If you are the candidate's research supervisor, comment on the originality of his or her proposal, and communicate what role you played in assisting the student with the proposal.

The following are the two issues that are the basis of NSF's merit review criteria:

- **Intellectual Merit:** The intellectual merit criterion includes demonstrated intellectual ability and other accepted requisites for scholarly scientific study, such as the ability to: (1) plan and conduct research; (2) work as a member of a team as well as independently; and (3) interpret and communicate research findings. Panelists are instructed to consider: the strength of the academic record, the proposed plan of research, the description of previous research experience, the appropriateness of the choice of references and the extent to which they indicate merit, Graduate Record Examinations (GRE) General and Subject Tests scores, and the appropriateness of the choice of institution for fellowship tenure relative to the proposed plan of research.
- **Broader Impacts:** The broader impacts criterion includes contributions that (1) effectively integrate research and education at all levels, infuse learning with the excitement of discovery, and assure that the findings and methods of

research are communicated in a broad context and to a large audience; (2) encourage diversity, broaden opportunities, and enable the participation of all citizens-women and men, underrepresented minorities, and persons with disabilities-in science and research; (3) enhance scientific and technical understanding; and (4) benefit society. Applicants may provide characteristics of their background, including personal, professional, and educational experiences, to indicate their potential to fulfill the broader impacts criterion.

2. I have been requested to provide a reference letter for a Graduate Research Fellowship applicant. I have lost the email from FastLane on how to log in as a reference writer. Who can help me retrieve my login information?

You can ask the applicant to resend the email to you. Or if you are unable to contact the applicant, contact the GRF Operations Center 1-866-673-GRFP (4737) (office hours: Monday-Friday, 8:30 am - 5:30 pm EST) or email help@nsfgradfellows.org.

3. I lost my password for the GRFP application. How can I get it?

On the Reference Writer login screen, click Forgot My Password to request that a temporary password be sent to you at your email address.

4. I have been requested to provide a reference letter for a Graduate Research Fellowship applicant. I have lost the email from FastLane. I would like another copy of the email. Who should I ask to resend the email?

Only the applicant can resend the email. Please contact the applicant to resend the email request to you.

GRFP FAQs for Fellows

1. I have been awarded a Fellowship under the NSF GRFP. How is my Fellowship going to be administered by NSF? What do I need to do to get started?
2. I have been awarded a Fellowship under the NSF GRFP. Who can help me with various questions related to the Fellowship?
3. I have been awarded a Fellowship under the NSF GRFP. How do I log into NSF GRFP?
4. I have a Fellowship under the NSF GRFP. My email address has changed. How can I update my email address in the system?
5. I have a Fellowship under the NSF GRFP. I forgot my login ID. How can I look it up?
6. I have a Fellowship under the NSF GRFP. I forgot my password. What should I do?
7. I have a Fellowship under the NSF GRFP. Can I defer my award?
8. Can I put the first year on reserve of my GRFP fellowship?
9. Can I work while holding the NSF GRFP fellowship?
10. Am I allowed to hold another Fellowship together with the NSF GRFP fellowship?
11. Am I allowed to change my institution of affiliation while holding the GRFP fellowship?
12. Am I allowed to change my research field while holding the GRFP fellowship?

1. I have been awarded a Fellowship under the NSF GRFP. How is my Fellowship going to be administered by NSF? What do I need to do to get started?

NSF uses the FastLane Graduate Research Fellowship Program System to administer the fellowships. As a fellow, you will manage your fellowship activities through the same online system with the same login account that you use for completing your application to the Graduate Research Fellowship Program. A number of documentations, including a User Guide, are located on the left side of the screen when you log in. The guide provides step-by-step instructions on how to update your fellowship status and request changes. Please read the manual carefully before using the system.

2. I have been awarded a Fellowship under the NSF GRFP. Who can help me with various questions related to the Fellowship?

If you are planning to study abroad, please send fellowship-related questions to grfp@nsf.gov and the GRFP office will assist you directly. (Please see FAQs for Fellows Abroad.) If you are going to study in an institution in the United States, please send fellowship-related questions to the Coordinating Official (CO) at your affiliated institution. The CO Directory is located on the left side of the screen when you log into FastLane's Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP) link. Section 3 of the Information for Graduate Research Fellows Guidelines, located on the left side of the screen after you log into Fastlane/GRFP, provides more detailed information. The CO is the first person you should contact with Graduate Fellowship-related questions. If your CO is unable to help, you can contact the NSF GRFP office directly.

3. I have been awarded a Fellowship under the NSF GRFP. How do I log into NSF GRFP?

NSF GRFP is the Graduate Research Fellowship Program link on the FastLane homepage. Log in using the same login account that you had used to submit your fellowship application.

4. I have a Fellowship under the NSF GRFP. My email address has changed. How can I update my email address in the system?

Log into the Graduate Research Fellowship application, and click the "Update My Profile" link to update your primary and secondary email addresses. If you have difficulty logging in and need to update your primary email address, please use the Forgot Password to reset your password directly. If you still have difficulty, please contact the FastLane Helpdesk at 1-800-673-6188 or email fastlane@nsf.gov.

5. I have a Fellowship under the NSF GRFP. I forgot my login ID. How can I look it up?

You can use the Forgot Username link to retrieve your username. You may also contact your school's coordinating official to look up your username. Or contact the FastLane HelpDesk at 1-800-673-6188 or email fastlane@nsf.gov.

6. I have a Fellowship under the NSF GRFP. I forgot my password. What should I do?

In the Login box for GRFP, click Forgot Password. The system will email you a temporary password. Once you receive the temporary password, return to the login page and enter your user ID and temporary password. You can also reset your password directly on the Forgot Password screen.

7. I have a Fellowship under the NSF GRFP. Can I defer my award?

Yes, with appropriate documentation, and on a case-by-case basis. Two types of deferrals are allowed—medical and military. Requests should come through the Fastlane/GRFP link.

8. Can I put the first year on reserve of my GRFP fellowship?

Yes. Any 2 of the 5-year award period can be put on reserve. You can do this via NSF GRFP.

9. Can I work while holding the NSF GRFP fellowship?

If the employment is short-term and is directly related to your graduate research program, NSF may grant permission on a case by case basis. Contact your institutional Coordinating Official (CO) for details.

10. Am I allowed to hold another Fellowship together with the NSF GRFP fellowship?

You cannot hold another major Fellowship while holding the NSF GRF. Contact the GRFP program office with details of your Fellowship to find out whether it would be considered major.

11. Am I allowed to change my institution of affiliation while holding the GRFP fellowship?

Yes. Submit your request on line through FastLane/GRFP.

12. Am I allowed to change my research field while holding the GRFP fellowship?

Submit your request through FastLane/GRFP in FastLane. NSF will make decisions on a case-by-case basis.

Graduate Research Fellowship FAQs for Fellows Abroad

1. I have been awarded a Fellowship under the NSF GRFP. I plan to attend a foreign institution. How are the stipend payments handled?
2. As a fellow abroad, how will my stipend be paid?
3. As a fellow abroad, will NSF adjust the stipend or Cost of Education depending on the currency exchange rate?
4. As a fellow abroad, how do I get reimbursed for my Cost of Education?
5. As a fellow abroad, what if my tuition and fees exceed \$10,500 per year?
6. As a fellow abroad, can I get the difference added to my stipend if my tuition and fees are less than \$10,500 per year?

1. I have been awarded a Fellowship under the NSF GRFP. I plan to attend a foreign institution. How are the stipend payments handled?

NSF does not send funds to foreign institutions. Monthly stipend payments are made directly to you after you submit the Fellowship Starting Certificate and the Payment Enrollment Form. Both are available when you log in to Fastlane/GRFP after you go to the “Prepare Fellows Abroad Information” link in your Fellows Abroad Task List. NSF does not authorize regular monthly stipend payments until we process these forms (which may require 4 to 6 weeks), particularly during your first year as a Fellow Abroad.

2. As a fellow abroad, how will my stipend be paid?

You can receive fellowship payments in either of these ways:

- NSF electronically deposits the payments directly in your personal account in a U.S. financial institution (bank, credit union, etc).
- NSF mails U.S. Treasury Checks directly to your home address or foreign address.

For more details on the process, contact the GRF Program Office (grfp@nsf.gov).

3. As a fellow abroad, will NSF adjust the stipend or Cost of Education (COE) depending on the currency exchange rate?

No. The award amounts are fixed in U.S. currency.

4. As a fellow abroad, how do I get reimbursed for my Cost of Education?

NSF reimburses you for the Cost of Education up to a maximum of \$10,500 per fellowship year. You must submit invoices/receipts to the GRF Program Office for the allowable Cost of Education expenses. NSF will pay the equivalent in U.S. currency in the same manner as the stipend is paid (electronic fund transfer to a U.S. bank or a U.S. Treasury Check mailed to your home or foreign address).

5. As a fellow abroad, what if my tuition and fees exceed \$10,500 per year?

If your tuition and fees exceed the maximum Cost of Education (\$10,500) during any tenure year, NSF does not provide you with the extra amount.

6. As a fellow abroad, Can I get the difference added to my stipend if my tuition and fees are less than \$10,500 per year?

No. You can be reimbursed for the actual tuition and fees only up to the maximum allowable amount.

GRFP FAQs for Coordinating Officials

1. How do I submit a Grants Roster report for the upcoming Fellowship Year?
2. When do I need to approve a Tenure Change Request?
3. I am in the process of submitting my Grants Roster Report for the upcoming year. What is the Financial Summary and what is the information contained in it?

1. How do I submit a Grants Roster report for the upcoming Fellowship Year?

Detailed instructions for submitting a Grants Roster report can be found in the Coordinating Official System Guide. A quick overview of the Grants Roster submission process can be found [here](#).

2. When do I need to approve a Tenure Change Request?

Tenure Change Requests needing approval will appear in the Coordinating Official Task List. The approval process for Tenure Change Requests varies on the type of request however a quick reference guide can be found [here](#).

3. I am in the process of submitting my Grants Roster Report for the upcoming year. What is the Financial Summary and what is the information contained in it?

You must now verify a Financial Summary for your Organization prior to submitting your Grants Roster for the upcoming Fellowship Year. The Financial Summary details the balance of your Organization's current GRF Award as well as the cumulative expenses recorded against this Award. This information combined with projected expenses for the upcoming year (as per the Grants Roster Report) are used to calculate a Maximum Budget Request. This Maximum Budget Request is your projected need for funding for the upcoming Fellowship Year. NSF may use this amount to calculate your Award amount for the upcoming year. A quick overview of the Financial Summary can be found [here](#).

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